



EduTrend Contents

P4C · IDENTITY AND SELF-UNDERSTANDING · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Labels

Do the labels others give us decide who we are?

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 04

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Labels

Students read an invented story about Ren, who is always called “the quiet one” at school and “the joker” at home. Ren starts to wonder which is true. Students list labels people get, sort them into chosen and given, helpful and limiting, then create questions and enquire into whether we choose who we are or others decide.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- analyse labels and stereotypes;
- distinguish chosen and given identity;
- reason about change;
- show respect in discussion.

KEY WORDS

label · stereotype · choose · given · identity · expect

CURRICULUM LINKS

PSHE: stereotypes and self-esteem. English: characterisation. Citizenship: diversity.

1

STIMULUS

Share something to think about

2

THINK

Quiet thinking time

3

QUESTION

Create and choose a question

4

ENQUIRE

Reason together

5

BUILD

Agree, disagree, add

6

REFLECT

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Ren story card
- Label sorting cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Keep to the invented story. Do not use labels that describe real classmates.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Read the story of Ren's two labels.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Do the labels others give us decide who we are?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Explain whether Ren can choose who to be, using two reasons.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Labels can shape how people see themselves and how others treat them.

Philosophers debate how much identity is chosen and how much is given by others and circumstances.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Labels are harmless.” They can limit people.
- “You are exactly what you are called.” People are more complex.
- “Nobody can change.” People grow and change.

Adapting the activity

Support

Sort helpful and limiting labels only.

Stretch

Write Ren's letter explaining who Ren really is.

WORKSHEET 1

Label sort

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Sort labels.

Label sort

Label	Chosen or given	Helpful or limiting

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Can we choose who we are? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Labels is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Identity and Self-Understanding programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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